

GESTINGTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 14th. March 2024 at 7pm in the Village Hall

Present: Cllrs D. Smith (Chair), P. Bagby, G. Carey, D. Green, Mr. Leslie Crumpton-Taylor (Internal Auditor) and Kevin B. Money (Parish Clerk). There were no members of the public present.

029/2024 Chairman welcome

a) To accept the resignation of Claire Craig from the Parish Council with immediate effect

030/2024 Apologies for Absence were received from ECC Cllr P. Schwier, BDC Cllr D. Holland and Cllr A. Cooper and Cllr P. Collett

031/2024 Declaration of Interest

To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary, Pecuniary or non-Pecuniary Interest relating to items on the agenda
None Declared

032/2024 To approve the Minutes of the last meeting of Gestingthorpe Parish Council

To receive and agree the minutes of the GPC meeting held on 11th. January 2024. **All Agreed**

To receive and agree the minutes of the EOM GPC meeting held on 23rd. February 2024. **All Agreed**

033/2024 Chairman's report and any update since last meeting

It was with sadness that I received Claire Craigs letter of resignation from the Parish Council. Claire was an active Councillor who brought a younger perspective to the work of the Council. She will be missed.

The Chestnut tree along Sudbury Road which came down in the storm in early January has been cut up and the wood cleared by the Village. Thanks to everyone who helped with clearance works.

We have recently planted 2 Oak trees. 1 on the playing field to replace the Chestnut tree and the other on the triangular green opposite Delvyns. A Red Chestnut has also been planted on Church Green to replace the diseased tree which was felled a number of years ago. Thanks to everyone involved in ordering the trees and planting.

The flooding problems in Church Street caused problems for both motorists and pedestrians. Essex County Highways attended and, hopefully, water is draining away.

a) **BDC are holding £980.65p of s106 monies.** Councillors to discuss projects for this money to be used 2 suggestions have been put forward. 1. Improvement on Kitchen area 2. Improving electrics in the pavilion Quote for new consumable board £519.06p + bulkhead light installed. Outside light Totalling £1027.71p +VAT Cllr G. Carey proposed to accept this quotation and to start the works ASAP. Cllr P. Bagby seconded. **All Agreed.** The Clerk to contact s106 officer at BDC

034/2024 Trees & tree planting – update from Cllr D. Smith

As referred to in my report, we have recently planted 3 trees. An Oak on the playing field to replace the Chestnut that fell during storm Henk. An Oak opposite Delvyns Lane. A Red Chestnut to replace the Red Chestnut that was diseased and had to be felled a number of years ago.

You will recall, we discussed one of the trees being planted in memory of the late Queen and another to commemorate King Charles III Coronation – each to have a suitable plaque.

Michael Sharp has had further tests carried out on the Chestnut Tree and the outcome will determine the future of the tree.

035/2024 Flooding/ drainage – update from Cllr D. Smith

The flooding problem on Church Street appears to be partly addressed by Highways. Unfortunately, our County Councillor is not with us this evening and we do not have an update from him or Highways.

The overflow from the pond in the grounds of the hall would appear to be blocked and the pond is overflowing onto Church Street. The road gully on both sides of Church Street were blocked causing the flooding issue. Highways eventually attended and jetted the gullies on the playing field on the side of Church Street and this discharged to the Sudbury Road ditch. The ditch needs clearing out and the blocked gullies and all drains jetted.

036/2024 2024 Emergency Plan – update from the Clerk

The Clerk thanked Cllr D. Green for updating the emergency plan for 2024

There were a few amendments which were made. This is now on the website.

037/2024 Public Participation Session

No questions from the public

038/2024 Essex County Councillor report – ECC Cllr Peter Schwier

No report was given but Cllr P. Schwier had circulated information throughout the month

039/2024 District Councillor report – BDC Cllr David Holland

In Cllr D. Hollands absence the Clerk had circulated his report. Which is below

The Budget setting process at BDC continues with no new implications that I am aware of for GPC than I have reported before.

I have been following up on other planning enforcement related issues of concern to Gestingthorpe and though I do not have concrete news at this time, I do expect to hear of progress this month and so will apprise you and your Councillors as soon as I have more information.

National Grid have now signed a Connection Agreement for a further 480mw connection for solar generation at the Substation at Butlers Wood. This is an agreement to connect roughly 1/2 gigawatt (gW) which is the equivalent 1% of all the electricity being used in the GB today (36.4gw as I write). This equates to facilitating the connection of an additional 1000+ acres of solar panels (in addition to the 2500+ acres we already knew about) within 11km of the substation near Twinstead. Given your proximity, this enablement for such huge amount of land usage for this purpose is in my view a matter of interest to GPC.

Plainly, there are other matters that GPC might want me to take up so as ever, I stand ready to deal with any issues you may wish to raise with me. In the meanwhile, if there is any news on any of the above, I will contact you soonest.

040/2024 Planning Applications

24/00409/HH - South Pot Cottage Pot Kiln Lane Gestingthorpe CO9 3BH

Side extension and addition of first floor annexe to existing garage

RESOLVED: Refuse this application due to the Scale bulk and design of the site

The application is not complete as there is no design and access statement. No heritage statement.

041/2024 Decision/s made by BDC on planning applications

No decisions have been made affecting Gestingthorpe

042/2024 Representative reports

- Highways – Cllr P. Collett

In the absence of Cllr P. Collett he had supplied a brief report prior to the meeting. It read:

Potholes etc. - I have continued to report potholes, damaged road signs and missing finger signs on the ECC Highways website, with no apparent action on the part of ECC.

Speeding - Speeding persists within the village at dangerous levels. I will liaise further with the Rural Policing Unit and the PCSOs to see if the number of speed checks can be increased.

F315 Bus Service - Despite the Parish Council's submission, it has been decided that the F315 bus service will be withdrawn and replaced with a "Digi Go" service. The service will change in July 2024.

- SID – Cllr P. Collett

In the absence of Cllr P. Collett he had supplied a brief report prior to the meeting. It read:

SID Sudbury Road - The speed survey was carried out by ECC but not in the position requested by the Parish Council. After a site visit with Daniel Maclean (The Highways Liaison Team Leader) it was agreed that he would ask the Local Highways Panel to consider funding a further survey in the correct position. The panel should give their decision in April.

- Play Equipment – Cllr P. Collett - Nothing currently to report in respect of the play equipment.

- Playing Field – Cllr A. Cooper

In the absence of Cllr A. Cooper, he had supplied a brief report prior to the meeting. It read:

I visited the Playing Field yesterday morning. Some of the bank next to the footpath, where the flooding occurred could be bolstered up, with a small amount of soil, to prevent a twisted ankle - if anyone was to slip off. The trees and hedge along the north and eastern side of the Playing Field will need trimming back at some point. I also cleared the outfalls into the ditch.

Grass cutting for 2024 is being undertaken by the Cricket Club

Cutting around the edge of the recreation ground Michael Green has submitted a quote of £150 per time needing about 6 – 8 times a year

Cllr G. Carey proposed Cllr P. Bagby seconded. **All Agreed**

- Footpath – Cllr P. Bagby

Ref 2892801 – Update - Defective bridge on PRoW - Footpath 1 Wickham St Paul

Inspected by Essex Highways. Issue has been listed for repair. Work to be scheduled.

Ref 2854201 – Completed - Vegetation problem on PRoW - Footpath 23 Gestingthorpe
EH reported that landowner has completed works on site.

Signage/Waymarker posts - 22/1/24 Email received from Essex Highways regarding new signage/waymarkers posts in the Gestingthorpe & Wickham St Paul area.

“Waymarking is not a statutory duty and therefore is not high on our list of priorities. However, over the last few months I have been speaking to local landowners about reinstating cross-field footpaths and I will be contacting them some more this week. Regarding the attached map, does anyone in the parish have a view on where they would like to see new waymark posts? If they are willing to mark up a map to show required locations or give me What3Word location references I would be happy to then supply the posts for local volunteers to install or if you don't have anyone available to do some digging, I can probably get some volunteers to pop over and lend a hand.”

No New Reports

- Village Hall – Cllr P. Bagby

The first Gestingthorpe Grill of the year held on 2nd March. It was well attended until around 10.30. We may cut the time by 15 minutes for future grills. Next grill is on 20 April.

The Coffee Mornings continue to be well attended with more than £370 raised so far in the current calendar quarter.

The next fundraising function is the annual quiz on 22nd. March. 30 tickets still available.

Other planned events: Plant sale & Sausage sizzle on 18 May and the Summer Solstice party on Saturday 24 June. This is part of the solstice celebrations including the beacon lighting being coordinated with the Parish Council.

The Hall Hire rates have been increased for 2024. This is to cover increased running costs but will be inclusive of heating cost. The heating meter will no longer be used and has been disconnected.

A new Barbeque has been purchased. The cost of the BBQ was covered in part by the grant from the Parish Council. The Management Committee would like to thank the Parish Council for the grant money received and can assure the PC that the BBQ will be put to good use.

As at the last committee meeting on 25th. January, the Treasurer reported cash balance of £5,282.14.

The next Management Committee meeting is 21st. March 2024

- Update on Parish News - Cllr P. Bagby

The Parish News has sufficient advertising to cover printing costs of for the year, i.e. 10 copies of 28 to 32 pages.

Each parish is limited to 2 pages of free editorial copy.

The last edition for 2023 (Dec/Jan) for which they were looking for funding was essentially paid for by using advertising for 2024.

The editor position was 'filled' but the applicant withdrew. Steve Harris is acting as editor for the time being.

Comment on February edition being too small. However need additional funding to increase number of pages.

Feedback on Facebook page by advertisers very positive

043/2024 Finance

- a) To receive the Bank reconciliations as at 29th. February 2024

Councillors noted the Bank reconciliations as at 29th. February 2024

- b) To receive the comparison of Actual to Budget for 2023/24

Councillors noted the comparison of Actual to Budget for 2023/24

c) To approve the payment of Accounts for February & March 2024 and to agree a transfer of funds to meet the Parish Councils financial requirements. **All Agreed**

- d) As Claire Craig has resigned from the Council the Clerk was asked to remove her as a signatory.

Cllr D. Smith proposed that all Councillors become signatories.

044/2024 Items for Next Agenda

New UTB signatory form

045/2024 Date of next meeting is on Thursday 9th. May 2024 at 7pm (Annual Village meeting & GPC AGM) - FUTURE meetings in 2024: 11.07.24: 12.09.24: 14.11.24

046/2024 Closure of the Meeting

To close the Meeting having considered and determined all items of business.

The Chairman then closed the meeting at 7.55pm and thanked everyone for attending

Signed

D Smith
Chairman
D. Smith

9th. May 2024